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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus

I. Introduction

1. The present report on the United Nations operation in Cyprus covers developments from 24 November 2008 to 10 May 2009 and brings up to date the record of activities carried out by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) pursuant to Security Council resolution 186 (1964) and subsequent Council resolutions, most recently resolution 1847 (2008). The report also elaborates on the activities of my Special Adviser on Cyprus in the context of my good offices mission.

2. As at 30 April, the strength of the military component stood at 859, including all ranks, and the strength of the police component stood at 69 (see annex).

II. Good offices mission and other developments

3. At the time of my previous report (S/2008/744), the Greek Cypriot leader, Demetris Christofias, and the Turkish Cypriot leader, Mehmet Ali Talat, had begun full-fledged negotiations under United Nations auspices aimed at the comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. From the formal launch of the process on 3 September to late November, the leaders met on nine occasions to discuss the governance and power-sharing arrangements of a future united Cyprus. Since then, there have been a number of important developments.

4. On 12 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 1847 (2008) extending the mandate of UNFICYP. The resolution urged the parties to fully exploit the opportunity of the negotiations, including by intensifying the momentum of the talks, preserving the current atmosphere of trust and goodwill and engaging in the process in a constructive and open manner. In resolution 1847 (2008), the Council also welcomed the appointment in July 2008 of Alexander Downer as my Special Adviser on Cyprus, whose mandate is to assist the parties in the conduct of full-fledged negotiations aimed at reaching a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem.

5. Since then, the leaders have held 18 additional meetings, bringing the total number of meetings since 3 September to 27. Discussions to date have revolved around governance and power-sharing issues, property issues, European Union

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matters and, partially, economic matters. Topics remaining to be addressed in the first reading or review of negotiation issues relate to security and guarantees and territory. All of these meetings have taken place in the presence of either my Special Adviser Downer, or my Special Representative Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, or both.

6. While the leaders have maintained a steady pace of almost one meeting per week, their efforts have also been supported by a gradually increasing number of preparatory meetings between their respective representatives, George Iacovou (Greek Cypriot) and Ozdil Nami (Turkish Cypriot), as well as technical meetings at the expert level. In early May, the leaders publicly committed, through my Special Representative, to intensifying their efforts further, not least through additional meetings at the level of their representatives.

7. On 22 December, the leaders issued a joint statement in which they reaffirmed their strong commitment and resolve to finding a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. In their statement, the leaders also recognized that, although some progress had been made, it had been insufficient. The two leaders thanked the United Nations for its contribution.

8. In parallel to the full-fledged negotiations, some of the technical committees established by the leaders in March 2008 have continued to meet, albeit at a slower pace than during the preparatory phase of the talks. Out of the seven established technical committees, four have continued to work — those on crime and criminal matters, cultural heritage, health matters, and the environment.

9. On 14 April, the leaders agreed to the implementation of 4 of the 23 confidence-building measures identified by the technical committees, which were aimed at improving the daily life of Cypriots across the entire island. They concern the passage of ambulances through crossing points in cases of emergency, the establishment of a communications and liaison facility (operating round the clock) to share information on crime and criminal matters, an initiative funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on awareness-raising measures for saving water and the establishment of an advisory board on shared cultural heritage. UNDP has earmarked more than $600,000 to support such initiatives.

10. Since my last report, I have had various contacts regarding the Cyprus issue directly with the leaders, Mr. Christofias and Mr. Talat, as well as with other key interlocutors, such as Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey and Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis of Greece. During these encounters, I reiterated my support to the process and urged those interlocutors to remain committed to the current process and to continue to show flexibility in the months ahead. All interlocutors expressed to me their support for a mutually acceptable solution.

11. Over the reporting period, my Special Adviser has been on the island on five separate occasions, to meet primarily with the leaders and their representatives and to host and facilitate the formal negotiations. He also used those opportunities to listen to as many views as possible from a wide cross-section of Cypriots on both sides of the political divide. This included regular meetings with the leaders of political parties, representatives of the business community and trade unions, religious figures, the academic community, civil society groups and others.

12. Since December, my Special Adviser has also travelled to London and Paris to meet with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as high-level

officials of the Office of the President and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France. All interlocutors reaffirmed their support for the peace process and their commitment to assisting the parties in their efforts. My Special Adviser is scheduled to visit Moscow and Beijing in May and June, respectively.

13. In late April, my Special Adviser briefed the Security Council on the developments in the negotiations, welcoming the good and steady progress achieved by the parties. The Council subsequently issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/10) on 30 April, in which the Council reiterated its full support for the process, commended the leaders for their political leadership and warmly welcomed the progress made so far and their joint statements. The Security Council strongly urged the leaders to increase the momentum in the negotiations, emphasizing the importance of all parties engaging "fully, flexibly and constructively" and said it looked forward to decisive progress in the negotiations in the near future.

14. In line with a request from both sides on 14 April 2008 for the United Nations to provide infrastructure and personnel support to allow the parties to carry forward the process, the Office of the Special Adviser has continued to strengthen its capacity. In coordination with the Department of Political Affairs and UNFICYP, the Office of the Special Adviser on Cyprus provides support to my Special Adviser and facilitates work on specific themes and chapters dealt with in the talks, as required. His immediate office aside, my Special Adviser is also assisted by international thematic experts, who provide him with insights into some of the more complex topics of the ongoing negotiations. To date, international thematic experts have been engaged on issues relating to governance and power-sharing, property and European Union matters.

15. As I reported previously, the United Nations has adopted an integrated approach, which maximizes synergies between my good offices mission and UNFICYP. My Special Representative and Chief of Mission of UNFICYP, Mr. Zerihoun, continues to serve as my Deputy Special Adviser on Cyprus. As such, he articulates and is the conduit for support — substantive and administrative — provided by UNFICYP and the United Nations country team to the good offices effort. In his capacity as Special Representative, he has also coordinated expertise from the United Nations country team in a common effort to help create an environment conducive to a successful outcome.

III. Activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

A. Prevention of a recurrence of the fighting and maintenance of the military status quo

16. During this reporting period, the situation in the buffer zone has remained stable. In general, the opposing forces have cooperated well with UNFICYP. The main focus of the military operations of the Mission has been to maintain stability in the buffer zone. UNFICYP has submitted a package of military confidence-building measures to both of the opposing forces. To date, the National Guard has responded by nominating a designated committee on confidence-building measures to work

with UNFICYP. It is hoped that this positive step will be followed by similar steps by the Turkish Forces soon.

17. The total number of military violations and other incidents during the current reporting period was 276. This figure represents a decrease of 22 per cent compared with the previous reporting period. Typical violations were minor in nature and had little effect on the stability of the ceasefire lines. Such violations included unauthorized improvements to military positions, incursions into the buffer zone, overmanning of observation posts and minor cases of ill discipline.

18. The opposing forces continue to employ low-level measures in an effort to irritate or cause minor intimidation of the opposing side. Such acts are more common where the positions of the opposing forces are in close proximity, as in the centre of Nicosia. It is hoped that the confidence-building measures proposed to both sides can be taken forward to help prevent such incidents in the future.

19. The Turkish Forces committed nine military airspace violations during the reporting period. These included VIP inspection visits of the ceasefire line by and resupply/troop rotation in the Kokkina pocket.

20. Both the National Guard and the Turkish Forces conducted low-level and familiarization training during the reporting period. In addition, the Turkish Forces conducted an armoured manoeuvre exercise (Grid 38SWD4286) east of Nicosia and within 1,000 metres of the buffer zone in sector 4. Due to the close proximity of the exercise to the buffer zone, it caused considerable concern to the National Guard. The exercise was conducted over a period of several weeks in March. It involved main battle tanks moving in close proximity to the ceasefire line in full view of the National Guard. The exercise was in contrast to the decision of both the National Guard and the Turkish Forces to cancel their major exercises ("Nikiforos" and "Toros") last year, as reported previously.

21. During the reporting period, the Turkish Forces increased the restrictions on the movements of UNFICYP. Since 1 January 2009, there have been 43 such incidents in the north. The restrictions have taken various forms, from preventing UNFICYP personnel from crossing at Turkish Cypriot checkpoints to escorting them out of the northern part of the island. UNFICYP has recently received assurances from authorities in the north that the restrictions have been lifted; however, although the rate of incidents has diminished, restrictions continue. The matter has also been raised by UNFICYP with the Turkish Forces and by United Nations Headquarters with the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations in New York. Further to these new incidents, routes continue to be denied on the Karpas peninsula and tight controls imposed on access to, and the conduct of operations within, the fenced area of Varosha. The United Nations continues to hold the Government of Turkey responsible for the status quo in Varosha.

22. Positions established by the opposing forces in the Dherinia area that violate the status quo, referred to in my previous reports (S/2008/353 and S/2008/744), remain in place. The Turkish Forces retain the checkpoint in the Laroujina pocket. They have conducted regular inspections of the liaison post at Strovilia, and have repeatedly overmanned the position, in violation of the military status quo in the area.

B. Demining activity in the buffer zone

23. The Cyprus Mine Action Centre has continued to manage mine clearance operations in the 26 minefields agreed for clearance under the current agreement. By the end of April, 21 of the 26 minefields had been cleared. Discussions continue with a view to obtaining the agreement of the Turkish Forces on the clearance of 12 additional mined areas.

24. The Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the European Union agreed to provide €2.5 million each to fund the project until April 2011. The European Union contribution is provided from the €259 million aid package for development in northern Cyprus. The €5 million should allow the programme to fulfil its objective of delivering a mine-free buffer zone.

C. Restoration of normal conditions and humanitarian functions

25. Cypriots from both sides continued to seek assistance from UNFICYP in facilitating day-to-day issues arising from the division of the island that affect their lives, including on educational matters, medical evacuations and the transfer of deceased individuals, as well as on commemorative, religious and sociocultural gatherings. The mission also continued to facilitate the normalization of conditions in the buffer zone and humanitarian assistance to the communities as required.

26. During the reporting period, UNFICYP recorded approximately 873,700 crossings through the buffer zone, of which 210,950 were through the Ledra Street crossing point. As at March, the two chambers of commerce recorded that goods worth approximately €500,000 crossed from the south to the north and goods worth approximately €2.3 million crossed in the opposite direction. Implementation of the joint project prepared by the two Nicosia municipalities under the Nicosia master plan for the restoration of buildings at Ledra Street, is still pending, awaiting agreement between the two sides.

27. Despite an earlier commitment, the impasse regarding the opening of Limnitis/Yeşilırmak and other crossings continues. Various options suggested by the United Nations have failed to satisfy the respective concerns of the parties.

28. UNFICYP, in cooperation with international and local partners, facilitated 65 bicommunal events, with the participation, since my last report, of more than 4,000 people from both communities who came together to promote the reunification of the island and support the ongoing negotiations between the leaders of the two communities. These events were held at the Ledra Palace Hotel and nearby in the buffer zone, which continues to be considered by both sides as a neutral venue.

29. On 17 March, the leaders spoke at a bicommunal event organized by the respective chambers of commerce and industry, which launched a new project for promoting greater business collaboration between the two communities. The UNDP-funded project aims to reinforce, foster and nurture economic interdependence between the two communities.

30. Regular monthly meetings between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political party leaders and representatives continued to be held at the Ledra Palace Hotel under the auspices of the Embassy of Slovakia. The political parties issued joint communiqués expressing support for the two leaders and the political process

and emphasizing the importance of education to promote the peaceful coexistence of communities, reconciliation and multiculturalism. The Government of Slovakia is hosting a meeting of this forum in Bratislava from 14 to 17 May to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the initiative.

31. UNFICYP continued to deliver humanitarian assistance to Greek Cypriots and Maronites living in the northern part of the island. During the reporting period, UNFICYP conducted 54 humanitarian convoys and visits to 367 Greek Cypriots and 133 Maronites in the north. The requests made by 11 Greek Cypriot and 44 Maronite internally displaced and refugee families that wish to return to, and permanently reside in, the north are still pending, owing to differences between the two sides over the eligibility criteria for permanent returns.

32. UNFICYP also continued to assist Turkish Cypriots living in the south in obtaining identity documents, housing, welfare services, medical care, employment and education. In Limassol and in Paphos, the mission has worked with local authorities and community representatives to strengthen support for the educational and social needs of the community. In this regard, there have been no new developments regarding the establishment of a Turkish-language primary school in Limassol.

33. Members of both communities continue to seek to use the buffer zone for various civilian activities, including farming, maintenance of public and private infrastructure, construction and commercial ventures. Consideration and facilitation of those activities while ensuring stability remains one of the main challenges facing the mission, as the continued lack of adherence to UNFICYP procedures regarding civilian activities in the buffer zone continues to pose problems to the implementation of the mandate of the mission.

34. During the reporting period, UNFICYP authorized 18 projects in the buffer zone, including the establishment of one new civil-use area. These projects included construction of a residential and agricultural nature, along with an increase in water extraction activities attributable to the recent drought conditions on the island.

35. UNFICYP continued in its efforts to assist in maintaining good relations and building confidence between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities in the mixed village of Pyla in the buffer zone. To that end, UNFICYP plays a mediation role and monitors long-standing arrangements established between the two communities. UNFICYP facilitated five bicommunal events involving children from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot schools in Pyla, in cooperation with an international non-governmental organization, as a means of increasing awareness and building confidence between the two communities. These events, which had been taking place at regular intervals, were suspended in early May due to disagreements between the communities.

36. The technical committee on cultural heritage continued to discuss the preservation, protection and restoration of immovable and movable cultural heritage on the island. Both sides continued to seek UNFICYP facilitation to access sites and icons of religious and cultural significance. During the reporting period, UNFICYP facilitated five religious and commemorative events on the island, which took place without incident. On 7 February and 25 April, holy mass was conducted in the Monastery of Apostolos Barnabas in the north, the latter mass to commemorate Easter. On 10 May, the Armenian community held prayers at the Monastery of

Sourp Magar in the north for the second time since 1974. In the buffer zone on 20 April, approximately 250 Greek Cypriot worshippers visited the church in the abandoned village of Varisha in an annual pilgrimage. On 10 May, an annual pilgrimage took place to the abandoned village of Ayios Georgios Soleas.

37. UNFICYP continues to liaise with the two sides on law enforcement and on issues related to crossings on humanitarian grounds. During the reporting period, UNFICYP facilitated 23 medical evacuations and the transfer of seven persons who were deceased (three Greek Cypriots and four Turkish Cypriots). The mission also conducted 34 prison visits to the 14 Turkish Cypriot inmates in the south and three visits to the one Greek Cypriot detained in the north.

38. Relations between UNFICYP and the police forces on both sides remained cooperative and constructive, with regular communications taking place between the United Nations police liaison officer and liaison officers from the respective police forces.

39. On 15 April, senior United Nations police members met with the Deputy Commissioner of Cyprus Police. Following the meeting, all Cyprus Police commanders of districts adjacent to the buffer zone were given a briefing at UNFICYP headquarters. The Cyprus Police district commanders met their United Nations counterparts and agreed to conduct regular monthly meetings at the local level.

40. In March and April, there were nine cases of theft in the area around Athienou, in the buffer zone. A large quantity of crops, covering at least seven farms, was harvested, and two water pumps were stolen. Enquiries in relation to these thefts are ongoing and United Nations patrols of both military and United Nations police members have been increased in the area. Escorts have also been provided to local farmers who were fearful they could become targets of thieves.

41. The technical committee on crime and criminal matters, which is facilitated by the United Nations police, met on three occasions during the reporting period and agreed to open a joint communications room, which will be staffed by representatives from both sides. The priority task for the joint communications room will be to exchange information and provide timely intelligence.

IV. Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus

42. During the reporting period, the Committee on Missing Persons continued the exhumation, identification and return of the remains of missing persons. By April, the remains of 530 individuals had been exhumed on both sides of the buffer zone by the Committee's bicommunal teams of archaeologists. The remains of more than 340 missing persons had undergone examination at the Committee's bicommunal anthropological laboratory in the United Nations Protected Area in Nicosia. Following DNA genetic analysis, carried out by a bicommunal team of scientists at the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics, the remains of 150 individuals had been returned to their respective families.

43. In March, the Committee on Missing Persons was invited by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg to present its activities. The Ministers' Deputies adopted a resolution strongly supporting the current work of the

Committee on Missing Persons and underlining the need for the Committee to have access to all relevant information and places concerning missing persons.

44. The Committee enjoyed broad political and public support during the reporting period. I continue to urge all parties concerned to take every possible action to speed up the exhumation process.

V. Financial and administrative aspects

45. As indicated in my last report, the General Assembly, by its resolution 62/255, appropriated the amount of $54.9 million gross for the maintenance of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, inclusive of the voluntary contribution of one third of the net cost of the Force, equivalent to $17.5 million, from the Government of Cyprus and the voluntary contribution of $6.5 million from the Government of Greece. I invite other countries and organizations to do likewise, with a view to reducing the portion of the cost of UNFICYP covered by assessed contributions.

46. My proposed budget for the maintenance of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, which amounts to $56 million gross, will be considered by the General Assembly during the second part of the resumed sixty-third session. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period of six months, the cost of maintaining the Force would be limited to the amount approved by the Assembly.

47. As at 31 March 2009, the total outstanding assessed contributions to the special account for UNFICYP for the period from 16 June 1993 to 15 June 2009 amounted to $16.8 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date amounted to $1,940.6 million.

48. Reimbursement of troop- and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made for the periods up to 30 June 2007 and 31 March 2007, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

VI. Observations

49. During the reporting period, the situation in the buffer zone remained calm. There was a decrease in military violations, and the opposing forces demonstrated restraint and overall good cooperation with UNFICYP. I am hopeful that the discussions on confidence-building measures initiated by UNFICYP will enjoy the support and cooperation of the opposing forces and produce tangible results.

50. The generally good cooperation with the opposing forces was marred by increased restrictions imposed on UNFICYP by the Turkish Forces. These restrictions are constraining the ability of UNFICYP to carry out its mandate and pose significant difficulties for the soldiers based in UNFICYP camps in the north and for UNFICYP civilian staff members conducting routine business in United Nations vehicles. I hope that, following recent assurances from the relevant authorities, UNFICYP will no longer be subjected to such restrictions of movement.

51. Both communities continued to rely on civilian assistance from UNFICYP in a variety of areas, ranging from humanitarian and economic matters to a variety of

bicommunal issues affecting the lives of Cypriots. UNFICYP's non-military activities, particularly in the buffer zone, are expanding as a result of popular demand. In the absence of any formal agreements between the sides, the authority of UNFICYP remains in many cases the only accepted means of resolving local conflicts. I call on both communities to continue to work closely with UNFICYP on solving practical day-to-day issues pending a comprehensive settlement. In this context, I renew my call on the parties to accept the 1989 aide-memoire used by the United Nations to regulate activities in the buffer zone.

52. Further progress has been achieved on the clearing of minefields in the buffer zone. Thanks to the generosity of the Government of Cyprus and the European Union and the support of authorities in the north, the operation, which is an important confidence-building measure, will proceed without interruption.

53. I note with satisfaction that the humanitarian work of the Committee on Missing Persons continues unhindered. I am additionally pleased that the activities of that Committee have also been strongly supported by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. I continue to urge all parties concerned to take every possible action to speed up the exhumation process.

54. Since my last report, the parties have maintained a steady rhythm of meetings, conducting the negotiations in a positive and constructive manner. The parties now move closer to the end of the first reading of the different issues, having recorded convergence on many points. As I have said on previous occasions, this is of little surprise, as the broad outline and established parameters of the solution are well known and already articulated by the two sides. Nor are they starting from scratch; they have the advantage of a significant body of work to draw upon.

55. At the same time, while areas of significant divergence may be fewer, most are nonetheless fundamental, reflecting the challenge of translating the agreed objective of a bizonal, bicommunal federation with political equality into a functional united Cyprus, where legitimate interests are not only represented but also effectively pursued.

56. My overall assessment is that, while the parties have made steady progress, I see a need for an increase in the pace of the talks as the sides start to address issues more holistically. Indeed, the parties themselves recognize that a settlement will be harder to reach as each day passes without a solution. They also acknowledge that the status quo is unacceptable and that the process cannot be open-ended. The spirit of the negotiations, and the constructive and open manner in which the two leaders are approaching the talks, demand that the solution should be achievable within a reasonable time frame.

57. It is important to note that the excellent personal chemistry between the leaders remains strong, despite the challenges facing them, both in the negotiations and domestically. Their often long one-on-one meetings prior to the plenary sessions are evidence of their mutual commitment and determination to see the process through. Together they have taken ownership of and full responsibility for the process. The challenge facing them — as partners and not adversaries — is to sustain the momentum of the process that they have begun as they enter the next phase of the talks. Further joint messaging and visible joint engagement may help in this direction.

58. I am gratified to see that the close relationship between the leaders has led to a lessening of the mutual public recriminations that were more prevalent in the past. At the same time, it is discouraging to note that, during the reporting period, polls have clearly shown a high level of scepticism among the respective populations towards the ongoing negotiations. Given that any eventual agreement will require popular support expressed through simultaneous referendums, it is imperative that the leaders develop strategies to actively communicate to their respective constituencies the economic, political, security-related and many other benefits of a solution, and to convey that a solution would be impossible without compromise.

59. An involved, informed and more energized civil society is essential to building trust and is desirable in and of itself. It is also an essential vehicle for garnering more support for a solution and creating an environment that is more conducive to moving the process forward. The active participation of civil society groups can contribute to making any future settlement sustainable. I call once again upon the sides to find the best means to facilitate the active involvement of Cypriot civil society in the debate and the effort to reach a solution on the future of their country.

60. It is disappointing that, since the agreement on nearly two dozen confidence-building measures during the preparatory phase of the talks, the parties have made little progress on their implementation during the reporting period. The original agreement had been received as a welcome breakthrough, not only for improving the daily life of many Cypriots across the entire island but also for encouraging and facilitating more interaction between the two communities. The apparent lack of political will to implement the agreed measures constitutes a missed opportunity in building public support within the communities for the process and creating an improved intercommunal atmosphere crucial to a future united Cyprus. In the same vein, military and other confidence-building measures, such as the creation of crossings, including at Limnitis/Yeşilırmak, and the implementation of the second phase of the restoration of the Ledra Street crossing, which UNDP stands ready to fund, would greatly contribute to an improvement in the atmosphere on the island. I call upon the parties to implement these measures without further delay.

61. As I have stated before, the establishment of economic, social, cultural, sporting or similar ties and contacts will have a positive impact on the ongoing efforts. Such contacts would nurture a sentiment of trust between the communities and help ease the sense of isolation felt by the Turkish Cypriots. Further, greater economic and social parity between the sides will make the eventual reunification not only easier, but also more likely. In the context of an internationally sanctioned peace process, efforts in the opposite direction can only be counterproductive.

62. On the process itself, the leaders have so far maintained the approach adopted since the start, namely to identify and put to the side the less controversial issues on which they agree, identify and negotiate options where they disagree, and put to the side those issues that are difficult to resolve at this stage or that should be considered in tandem with other issues. In this way, the parties have been diligently and commendably consolidating the positions into a meaningful body of understandings to allow for the necessary compromises at a later stage.

63. Both leaders recognize that a comprehensive agreement can only be reached by moving, in the spirit of compromise, beyond positions of principle to how these principles will be applied in practice, and by addressing issues of difference that cut across one another, not in isolation but as areas for potential compromise. They also

recognize that a lasting solution to the Cyprus problem will only be achieved through a negotiated settlement.

64. To this end, and to help bring the negotiations to a successful conclusion, the need to rationalize the process to deliver results becomes more pressing. The recent increase in the number of meetings at the level of representatives and experts, as a dedicated structure in support of the leaders, as well as the commitment of the leaders in early May to intensify this level of the talks, has been encouraging. As the leaders conclude the first reading, it will be necessary for them to give shape to the broader outline of an agreement which will naturally emerge. The representatives could play a useful role in taking this idea forward in a dynamic and interactive manner.

65. As indicated in the presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/10) adopted by the Security Council on 30 April, the Council has commended the leaders for their political leadership and warmly welcomed the progress made thus far. In my view, there is a clear expectation and desire on the part of the international community that the leaders continue to engage flexibly and constructively in the negotiations, with the aim of making decisive progress in the near future.

66. Based on the encouraging progress to date, I reiterate that the support of the United Nations to the process will remain unwavering under the leadership of my Special Adviser. The role of the United Nations is to accompany the parties and to assist and facilitate this Cypriot-owned process, as required; in this I will spare no effort. I remain fully prepared, at their request, to offer more assistance.

67. For the time being, and in the absence of a comprehensive settlement, I believe that UNFICYP continues to play a vital and unique role on the island, both as a stabilizing factor on the ground and as a source of substantive and administrative support for my good offices mission. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the mission for a further period of six months, until 15 December 2009.

68. At the same time, in light of my earlier stated intention to keep all peacekeeping operations under review, and, more specifically, as the Security Council has reaffirmed in resolution 1847 (2008), I will continually keep the operations of UNFICYP under close review, taking into account developments on the ground and the views of the parties, and will revert to the Council with recommendations as appropriate for further adjustments to the UNFICYP mandate, force levels and concept of operations as soon as warranted.

69. In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to my Special Adviser, Mr. Downer; my Special Representative and Chief of Mission, Mr. Zerihoun; the Force Commander, Rear Admiral Mario César Sánchez Debernardi; and to the men and women serving in UNFICYP and the good offices mission for the efficiency and dedication with which they have discharged the responsibilities entrusted to them by the Security Council.

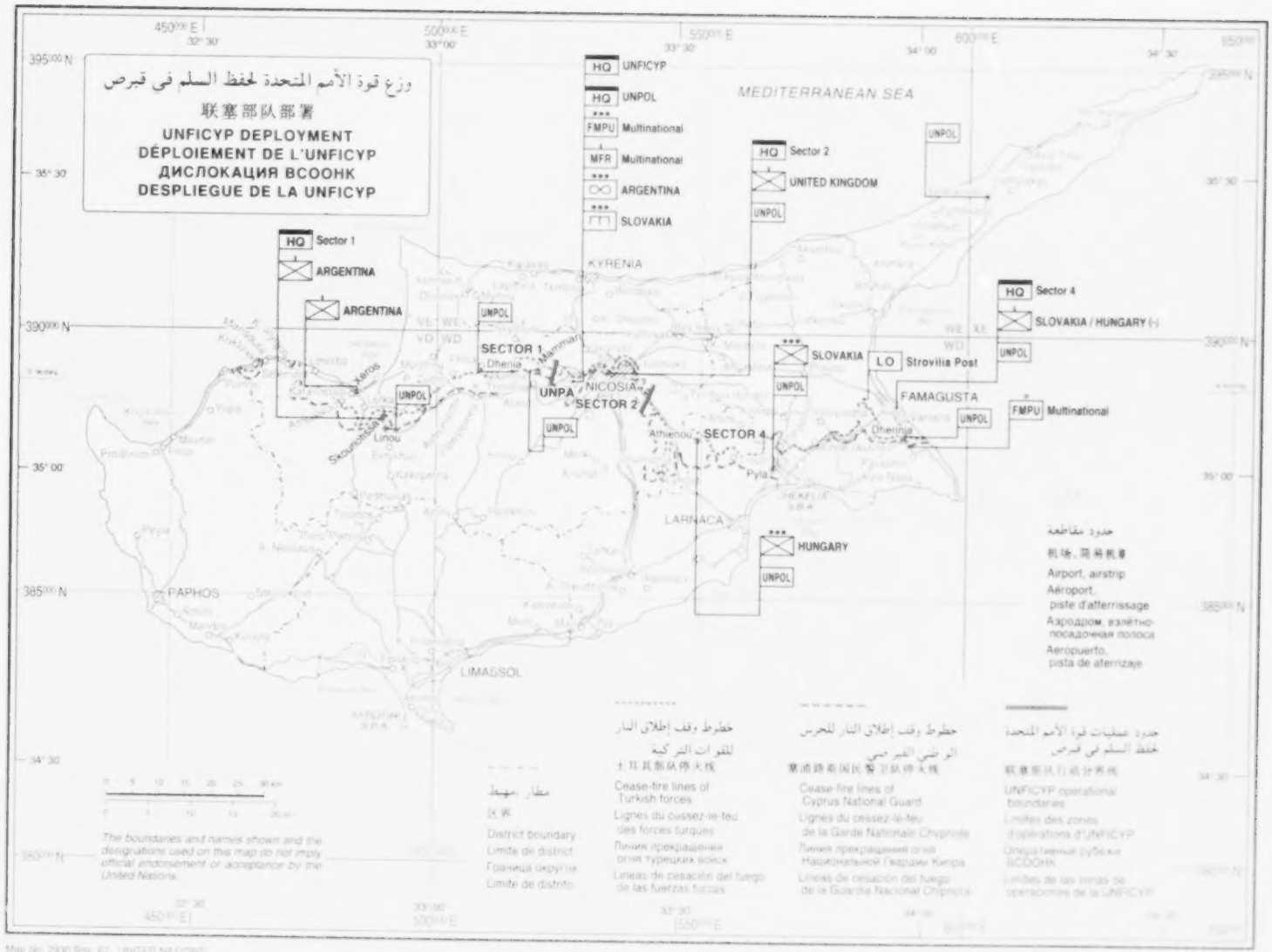
Annex

Countries providing military and civilian police personnel (as at 10 May 2009)

Country	*Military personnel*
Argentina*	295
Austria	4
Canada	1
Hungary	84
Peru**	2
Slovakia***	200
United Kingdom	273
Total	**859**

	United Nations police
Argentina	3
Australia	15
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3
Croatia	4
El Salvador	8
India	7
Italy	4
Ireland	18
Netherlands	7
Total	**69**

* The Argentine contingent includes soldiers from Chile (15), Paraguay (14) and Brazil (1).
** Peru is using one vacant Canadian and one British post in HQ UNFICYP.
*** The Slovakian contingent includes soldiers from Croatia (4).



Map No. 2930 Rev. 67 UNITED NATIONS
May 2009